



Florida House of Representatives

HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

402 South Monroe Street
Tallahassee, Florida
32399-1300

Adam Hasner
Majority Leader

322 The Capitol
(850) 488-1993

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 23, 2010

CONTACT: Joseph Agostini
(850) 488-1993

REPRESENTATIVES MARLENE O'TOOLE & DEBBIE MAYFIELD TO FILE LEGISLATION TO REQUIRE LEGISLATORS AND EXEMPTED STATE EMPLOYEES TO PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE FOR HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE

TALLAHASSEE – Representative Marlene O'Toole (R-Lady Lake) and Representative Debbie Mayfield (R-Vero Beach) today announced their intention to file legislation in the upcoming 2010 legislative session to require all state employees currently exempted to contribute to the cost of their health insurance. This legislative change could save the state \$56 million dollars a year.

Currently, state health insurance benefits fit into two categories - family and individual coverage. Career service employee health insurance premiums are set at \$180.00 a month for family coverage, and individual coverage at \$50.00 a month. There are approximately 75,000 career service employees. The exempted classes who do not contribute monthly include legislators, legislative staff, Senior Management, and Selected Exempt Service System employees. In the fiscal year 2008-2009, the number of state employees in the exempted classes included 9,025 with individual coverage and 25,799 with family coverage.

"With taxpayers struggling to afford their own insurance, there is no reason that they should also be expected to pay for state employees' health costs," said Representative O'Toole.

"Everyone should pay towards their health insurance coverage," said Representative Mayfield. "When taxpayers are struggling to pay their own bills, we should not expect them to supplement ours as well."

"Representative Mayfield and I will continue to look at the area of state employee benefits. These benefit costs are driving other states towards bankruptcy and we need to protect taxpayers by making sure it does not happen here," stated Representative O'Toole.

Over the past four years, the cost to the state for state employees' health insurance benefits has risen nearly 32 per cent.

Employees in the state university system are not included in this legislation because they have their own health insurance program.

###